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CIA 4 US - URANIUM

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PROGRAM All Things Considered....

STATION WETA FM Radio
NPR Network

DATE August 15, 1977 5:00 PM

CITY Washington, D. C.

SUBJECT CIA Study on Possible Diversion of Nuclear Materials

BOB EDWARDS: A week ago, the federal government revealed that four tons of nuclear material could not be accounted for at private and government fuel plants. At that time, federal safeguard officials alleged that none of this material had been stolen.

Now NPR's Barbara Newman has discovered that a CIA investigation of missing bomb grade uranium at the Pneumec (?) Plant in Apollo, Pennsylvania concludes otherwise.

BARBARA NEWMAN: Congressional investigators have told National Public Radio that the CIA has advised them that it has concluded that 400 pounds of bomb grade uranium that mysteriously disappeared from the Pneumec Plant in the mid 1960s was diverted or stolen. This conclusion contradicts official statements that there's no evidence of a diversion ever taking place.

Up until now, federal safeguard officials have denied the existence of the CIA investigation into the missing Pneumec uranium. NP has learned that technically this is an accurate statement. The CIA's involvement came in the course of investigating reports that Israel attained a nuclear weapons' capability in the mid 1960s. Agency officials are now telling congressional investigators that a probe of Israel's nuclear capability led them to the Pennsylvania nuclear plant.

For more than twelve years after the disappearance of the Pneumec uranium, it was officially denied. But privately, speculation centered on the possible diversion of material to Israel. The then Pneumec president, Zalmen Shapiro (?), was involved in a nuclear joint venture with the Israeli government and made many trips to that country.

Many top government safeguard officials learned some of